

STATEMENT OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for occluding a blood vessel having a severed end and a lumen extending therefrom with a longitudinal axis, the apparatus comprising:

an insertion device; and

a plug for insertion along the longitudinal axis into the lumen of the blood vessel, the plug having a distal tip, a tapered outer surface extending from said distal tip, a large diameter section, an interior chamber with a rear opening proximally disposed from said distal tip, a plurality of spokes, and an attachment means, said plurality of spokes extending from said interior chamber and out said rear opening and radially outward, ~~wherein~~ said attachment means disposed within said interior chamber of said plug, for attaching the plug to the insertion device, wherein when the plug is inserted axially into the lumen of the blood vessel adjacent its severed end said plug is sufficiently rigid in order to resist compressive forces applied thereto by the inner wall of the blood vessel such that the plug is gripped by compressive forces exerted by the elastic nature of the inner wall of the blood vessel and said distal tip, said tapered outer surface and said large diameter section together define a continuous occluding surface that thereby occludes blood flow through the lumen of the blood vessel, and

the insertion device having interface means that cooperates with the attachment means of the plug to attach the plug to the insertion device and means for applying an axial force from a proximal position relative to the rear opening of the plug and the severed end of the blood vessel to insert the plug into the lumen of the blood vessel adjacent its severed end.

2. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the attachment means of the plug comprises a pilot hole disposed within said interior chamber.
3. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the plug further comprises an inner corrugated surface disposed within said interior chamber.
4. (cancelled)
5. (original) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the plug is made of silicon.
6. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein the insertion device further comprises:
 - a. a needle;
 - b. a tubular needle guard surrounding the needle, the needle fitting into a pilot hole of the plug;
 - c. a spring connected to the needle to propel the needle outwards; and
 - d. a lever operable to compress and decompress the spring.
7. (currently amended) A plug for occluding a blood vessel having a severed end and a lumen extending therefrom, and the plug is for use with an insertion device, the plug comprising:

a distal tip, a tapered outer surface extending from said distal tip, said tapered outer surface having a large diameter section and defining an interior chamber with a rear opening proximally disposed from said distal tip;

a plurality of spokes that extend from said interior chamber out said rear opening and radially outward, said plug being sufficiently rigid in order to resist compressive forces applied thereto by the inner wall of the blood vessel such that the plug is gripped by compressive forces exerted by the elastic nature of the inner wall of the blood vessel when inserted into the lumen of the blood vessel adjacent its severed end by an insertion device and said distal tip, said tapered outer surface and said large diameter section together define a continuous occluding surface that occludes ~~to thereby occlude~~ blood flow through the lumen of the blood vessel; and

attachment means, disposed within said interior chamber of said plug, for attaching the plug to the insertion device.

8. (previously presented) The plug as recited in claim 7 wherein the attachment means is a pilot hole to enable the plug to be attached to the insertion device.

9. (cancelled)

10. (previously presented) The plug as recited in claim 7 further comprising an inner corrugated surface disposed within said interior chamber.

11. (cancelled)

12. (original) The plug as recited in claim 7 wherein the plug is made of silicone.

13 -14 (cancelled)

15. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein said tapered outer surface defines at least one edge defining said rear opening, and said plurality of spokes extend radially outward at positions offset along said longitudinal axis from said at least one edge.

16. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein said spokes extend radially outward to tips that are spaced apart in an annular fashion at a diameter greater than the cross-sectional diameter of the large diameter section.

17. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 1 wherein said spokes comprise metal.

18. (previously presented) The apparatus as recited in claim 17 wherein said metal comprises tungsten.

19. 20. (cancelled)

20. ~~24.~~ (currently amended) The plug as recited in claim 7 wherein said tapered outer surface defines a longitudinal axis and includes at least one edge defining said rear opening, and said plurality of spokes extend radially outward at positions offset along said longitudinal axis from said at least one edge.

21. ~~22.~~ (currently amended) The plug as recited in claim 7 wherein said spokes extend radially outward to tips that are spaced apart in an annular fashion at a diameter greater than the cross-sectional diameter of the large diameter section.

22. ~~23.~~ (currently amended) The plug as recited in claim 7 wherein said spokes comprise metal.

23. ~~24.~~ (previously presented) The plug as recited in claim 23 wherein said metal comprises tungsten.

24. ~~25.~~ (currently amended) A plug for occluding a blood vessel where the plug is for use with an insertion device, comprising:

a substantially frusto-conical, flexible, non-expanding element having an outer wall with a closed nose, an interior chamber, and a rear opening, said element being sufficiently rigid in order to resist compressive forces applied thereto by the blood vessel such that the plug is gripped by compressive forces exerted by the elastic nature of the blood vessel when inserted into the blood vessel and said distal tip, said tapered outer

surface and said large diameter section together define a continuous occluding surface that occludes to thereby occlude blood flow through the lumen of the blood vessel;

a plurality of flexible metal spokes coupled to said element and extending from said interior chamber out said rear opening and in a relaxed state, radially outward and past said non-expanding element; and

a coupling element disposed within said interior chamber of said plug permitting the plug to be coupled to the insertion device.

25. ~~26.~~ (previously presented) A plug according to claim 25, wherein:

said coupling element is integral with said flexible metal spokes.

26. ~~27.~~ (previously presented) A plug according to claim 26, wherein:

said coupling element defines a pilot hole which receives the insertion device.

27. ~~28.~~ (previously presented) A plug according to claim 25, wherein:

said outer wall has a maximum diameter of between 1mm and 4mm.